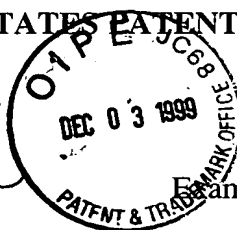


IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Robert HALLOWITZ *et al.*Serial No.: 09/296,534 *Ng*

Filed: April 22, 1999

For: METHODS AND COMPOSITIONS FOR DETERMINING LATENT
VIRAL LOAD

Examiner: B. Nelson

Group Art Unit: 1648

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1/5/00RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENTAssistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

Receipt of the restriction requirement dated November 12, 1999 is acknowledged. Applicant elects Group 1, Claims 1-16, with traverse. The claims have been divided into two groups. However, each group comprises overlapping subject matter. For example, both groups involve latent viral load. A search of both classes of claims would therefore concern the same subject matter. Thus, there would be no additional burden to examiner the entire application.

If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on its merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions. M.P.E.P. 803. In view of these comments, withdrawal of the restriction is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Filed: December 3, 1999

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